THE ADVENT

. X, No. 1 February 1953

A Quarterly Devoted to the Exposition of Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Future

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION LIBRARY 1961

Subscription : Inland, Rupees Five; Foreign, Twelve Shillings Six Pence

Inland : Single Copy, Rupee One and Annas Eight

PUBLICATION OFFICE :— SRI AUROBINDO LIBRARY, GEORGE TOWN, MADRAS

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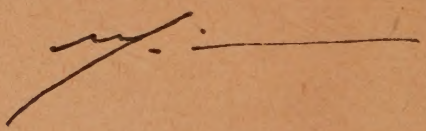
The Advent

V. 10-12
1953-55

In each one's life a moment comes when he has to make a choice between the Path and the muddle. You cannot put one foot here and one foot there. If you try it you will be torn to pieces.

A heart that does not choose is a heart that will die.



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The ADVENT

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"Mine is the labour of the battling gods:
Imposing on the slow reluctant years
The flaming will that reigns beyond the stars,
They lay the law of Mind on Matter's works
And win the soul's wish from earth's inconscient force."

SAVITRI, IX. 2. SRI AUROBINDO

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The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - - *Sri Aurobindo.*

EDITORIALS*

THE PERSONAL AND THE IMPERSONAL

AS you go up in your consciousness towards the origin of things you come finally at the end of things: you are beyond the names and forms that make up the universe, beyond even the subtle names and forms at the topmost. You arrive at something formless, impersonal, unthinkable, unique, infinite and eternal. It is at best a vast force or a state of consciousness. When you come in contact with it, you lose your personal form, your separate individuality and become the featureless absolute. Many religions and philosophies consider this status to be the supreme, the highest and the origin of things. In reality, however, it is not the end of things nor the supreme status. You can rise further beyond. Your consciousness enters into the formless and impersonal and merges its separate existence there and then emerges again; it envisages a reality which is not formless but has a form, it is not impersonality but a Person, with which or with whom you

* Based on Mother's Talks

can have a personal relation unlike the relation or lack of relation with the Impersonal. But this form beyond the formless is not like the forms of the inferior consciousness: it is the Form of forms. And it is not a person like a human being or even a divine being or god, but an essential personality, the Person of persons. It has not the limitation or exclusiveness of ego-bounded individuality (even the gods are ego-bounded); it has a kind of fluid boundedness or outline which is recognizable as that of a definite Person, but it has not the fixity or rigidity of lower forms.

And yet to arrive at this supreme Person, to come in contact with Him, it is necessary to pass through and have the experience of the formless impersonal infinity. For that breaks the inferior moulds, the narrow egoistic formations which are only aberrations or obscure images of the true Person.

*
**

Somewhat on the same line the vital too has to proceed to transform itself. It must get rid of its ignorant and violent impulses, its obscure formations: it must be thoroughly cleansed and purified. For that it must learn to be quiet and silent—absolutely still and passive; and in that quiet passivity to feel, to be conscious of the Divine Presence, to be saturated with it. When once that is done, it is called upon to come out and take part in active life. Normally, however, the tendency is, when one has withdrawn and lived an inward quieted life, on coming back to outer life, to turn to the old accustomed ways and reactions; one falls back into the old groove of the consciousness. The vital should then make the experience and the realisation of the Divine Presence dynamic so that it may be a living reality; the vital must be conscious of it in the midst of all activities, not merely in the indrawn state. The energy of the vital must be put out into a complete and perfected living, but it must not run into old moulds and take up the habitual modes; with the constant sense of the Divine, the everpresent truth and beauty of the Divine's consciousness, the vital will possess a new life and create a new pattern of living.

"I HAVE NOTHING, I AM NOTHING"

The state is that of utter commonplaceness. The feeling that I am doing Yoga, that I am something and have a special work to do, that something

has to be achieved, that life has a purpose etc. etc. all that has left and left a blank, a void inside and an absolutely mechanical automaton outside. I do the most ordinary things of life, as any other common man, like the routine work of a machine; I know nothing and have no impulse to know or to plan as to what I should do, how I am to move or why is it all like this. A great tranquillity and silence possesses the whole being. There is no "I", no person to refer to in the consciousness: individuality has been totally abolished, a sweep of universality passes through the consciousness and makes it as it were a no man's land. The mind has laid down its burden and says it is free now and obedient to the call that may come to it. The vital too submits its adherence and awaits the order: it has no inclination or choice of its own. The physical is likewise wholly docile.

This state of supreme blankness and passivity borders on the experience of illusion—the illusoriness of the world and the vanity or hollowness of life. Creation does seem like an empty shell, with no meaning or purpose and no real truth of existence even: it is a shadow play that rests on nothing and vanishes into nothing. The great exponents of Illusoriness must have had an experience of this kind and considered therefore that—Nothingness—as the ultimate truth and mystery of existence.

Now when all sense of personality—not only the sense but even the fact itself—had totally dissolved, the voice of the Supreme Divine was heard and His impulsion recorded. The *Prayers and Meditations* hereafter were written through such an impulsion; it was truly automatic writing—the instrument did not know what it was writing and even did not understand the meaning of the recorded words, it was merely a copyist, it looked at the writing as a third person would.

The whole being in all its parts acted thus like a recording or transferring agency. It was under such conditions—at the zero point of human personality and consciousness—that the instrument which so long lived apart and behind, concerned with itself more or less, was made to come forward and take up the work that the Divine demanded of it. The vessel that was completely empty, a universal and transcendental shape, came gradually to be filled, with the Divine's own will and its own formations.

HERE OR ELSEWHERE

It is easy and comfortable to go within and in an inner consciousness

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find and maintain a union, even a close union with the Divine. It is because of such a state of peace and bliss that many, nay, most who go there do not want to come back, to normal life upon this earth. And teachers, great or small, almost invariably, have taught that in the end it is best like that, and perhaps the only thing to do under the circumstances. For this life and this earth mean the very opposite of that inner heaven and that highest good. But some are not given this comfortable solution of the difficulty. They are asked to turn back and live the life of the earth. They are not allowed to remain cosy in a narrow room and be busy always with themselves alone. Indeed, is it not narrow egoism to seek only one's own salvation? When one has saved himself, is it not his duty—the logical outcome and implication of his personal freedom—that he should seek to help others in their salvation? Such was in fact the attitude of the Amitabha Buddha.

A house is on fire. It has a tarred roof. One can easily understand the fury of the fire. Some inmates who were trapped have managed to come out in time, although somewhat bruised and scalded. But there were others, some children, left inside. One of those who came out rushes back again through the flames and comes and goes till all are saved. He is badly burnt, he has risked his life: he did not mind and could not remain at a safe distance. He could not be contented with saving himself, which was to be sure a sufficient gain in one respect. This soul had a consciousness of his wider self.

In the same way, there are souls that have emerged out of the fire of earthly life and are enjoying the safety and security of the heavens; but they have been called to come back into the world, add to the experience of the tranquil above the experience of the trouble below. Surely it increases the scope of their consciousness. But to turn upon the world means also to re-enter into ignorance, for this world means ignorance, as it is, it is nothing but ignorance. The role then of one who returns is once more to embrace ignorance, but with a view to bringing into it the light and bliss that he gained from above, permeating the stuff of the present world with the substance of the higher consciousness. It is a sacrifice demanded of him, thus to abandon the eternal felicity of the high heavens—the unbroken union with the Divine above—and to enter into the depths of "this great perilous world": but this is a privilege too, to bring solace to the afflicted, the transforming light to obscure souls, the radiant energy to inert earth. It is a high privilege for which the luminous soul is thankful: he modestly

accepts a gift of grace from the Supreme. He accepts the Ignorance and offers it: he lays it at the feet of the Supreme so that it may be transmuted into light—light here below. His own role is that of a modest intermediary.

WHEN IMPERFECTION IS GREATER THAN PERFECTION

A perfected consciousness is attained in the highest status of being, when it is full of light and delight, peace and purity, one with the Divine Consciousness. Such a consciousness, when it comes down upon earth in its original unmixed clarity, lives as a foreign element and has no real contact with the world; it can have only a very indirect influence upon men and things. If the perfect, the divine consciousness has to be truly effective, has to change human and world nature, it must put on partially at least that nature; it must share in the imperfection of ignorance so that it can show how that imperfection can be dealt with and transformed. The Divine has to become human, even the o dinary human, in a sense, in the outward instrumental aspect, to a greater or lesser degree as needed, so that He may come in living contact with the obscure lower consciousness and put His light into it and gradually purify and illum ne it. If, however, the consciousness retains its fullness of power and light and makes its appearance as such, it may dazzle and overwhelm, as a meteor miracle, but leave nothing substantial behind. This is what has happened in the past of man's history. The saints and sages, the greatest and the most genuine among them, mostly dwelt apart from humanity in consciousness and even away from human contact; the earth could not profit wholly by their example.

Therefore the Mother says in her *Prayers and Meditations* that having gone beyond all desires still she had to live in the midst of desires; she had no choice of her own, no preference, no attachment, no need of anything, yet she was put in the conditions of very ordinary life, the normal human life; she had to deal with the common man, handle the small insignificant objects of material existence. In one part of her being she had to identify herself with ignorance and obscurity, so much so that even the distinction between consciousness and unconsciousness—the conscient and the inconscient—was for a time obliterated. Naturally, the inmost being in its inner self remained always calm, luminous, inviolable, but it put around

itself this body of ordinary nature to meet its ordinary reactions and through them gradually to uplift and train it to manifest and incarnate the inmost divine.

The gods are perfect; but, it is said, they have to become men, come down upon earth and assume human proportions—that is, imperfections, —if they wish to progress further, attain still higher levels of consciousness. For, the gods are perfect each in its own limited and well-defined and therefore unchangeable type; but man means an aspiring soul, that is to say, infinity—his very imperfection is a sign and symbol of ever greater possibility; the fluidity of his nature means an opportunity.

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SOUL

The individual has a soul. Likewise a collection of individuals, a group too has a soul. When persons habitually meet together for a certain purpose, they form a set or society and gradually tend to develop a common consciousness which is the beginning of a soul. At school, they who read together, the class, they who play together, the team, all who live and move together inspired by the same or similar impulses and ideas possess a rudimentary soul. In the same way, a bigger group, the nation has also a soul, each its own according to its nature, tradition and culture. Even a continent has a soul. One can speak of the soul consciousness of Europe, of Asia or of Africa. Indeed each cell of an organism has a consciousness of its own; it may be said to be the unit individual consciousness. Many such cells combine to form the organism, the individual (who in this way may be viewed as a composite or collective being). Many individuals form the family—each family with its group consciousness (whence the idea of *kuladharma*, the genius of the family or the tradition and stamp of a Royal House). Many families formed the tribe, here too each with its particular consciousness. And then families and tribes have formed the modern nation, each one a distinct and almost a well-developed soul. The grouping continues to enlarge and we have the many nations combining to form the human group as a whole; humanity too has its own consciousness and its own soul. There is no limit to the volume or dimension of the group. The earth has its soul consciousness, even as the sun or a star or any other planet. The solar system or a galactic system too is moved by its own secret consciousness.

THE WONDER OF IT ALL

The ordinary consciousness takes for granted the things that exist as ey are. It does not question; it finds everything very natural and as a atter of course. It sees and expects to see the same old familiar things epeated and is not struck by any extraordinary note in them. That is the nconsciousness of the ordinary consciousness. But when you begin to be onscious, when you look about and gaze at things, you awake, as it were, om sleep, and begin to question, to wonder: why it is like this, how is it , what is it, to what purpose etc. etc. Normally you see the sun rises, in falls, earth rotates—but you do not spend a thought over any of these bjects or happenings, except so far as they are useful or simple nuisance. ut when there is a light in you and you become conscious, conscious of ourself and of things around you, every thing acquires an importance, a ense and you are full of wonder, wondering at a wonderful creation. The ore you advance, the more the light grows in you, all the more your wonder creases. As your awareness increases, your interest too increases. A ew beauty surrounds, flows out of every object and event. You do not ke things for granted and let them pass mechanically, but meet every ne of them as a guest, with whom you wish to make acquaintance and be miliar, each one having a message for you and yourself something to eliver. That is a source of inexhaustible delight and of ever increasing nowledge.

CORRECTION

The two poems published in our last issue are not by Sri Aurobindo—*The Editor.*

SONNETS

I

MOMENTS

IF perfect moments on the peak of things,
These tops of knowledge, greatness, ecstasy,
Are only moments, this too enough could be.
I have assumed the rapid flaming wings
Of souls whom the Ignorance black-robed Nature brings
And the frail littleness of mortality
Can bind not always; a high sovereignty
Makes them awhile creation's radiant kings.

These momentary upliftings of the soul
Prepare the spirit's glorious permanence.
The peace of God, a great still transience[1]
Is now my being's boundless atmosphere.
All parts are gathered into a timeless whole;
All moments last in an eternal Year.

29-9-1939
2-10-1939

SRI AUROBINDO

[1] a great calm immanence

II

THE COSMIC SPIRIT

I AM a single Self all Nature fills.
Immeasurable, unmoved the Witness sits:
He is the silence brooding on her hills,
The circling motion of her cosmic mights.

I have broken the limits of embodied mind
And am no more the figure of a soul.
The burning galaxies are in me outlined;
The universe is my stupendous whole.

My life is the life of village and continent,
I am earth's agony and her throbs of bliss;
I share all creatures' sorrow and content
And feel the passage of every stab and kiss.

Impassive, I bear each act and thought and mood;
Time traverses my hushed infinitude.

15-10-1939
5-11-1939

SRI AUROBINDO

HYMN TO INDRA*

1. Come, O Indra, thou takest rapture by all the bodily parts of thi Matter; full of the great, setting thyself to it by thy force.

2. Increase thy strength, and do ye when the nectar is expressed creat rapture for Indra the taker of joy, activity for the doer of our actions.

3. Rejoice, O swift of mood, with praises that awake delight, O thou all-doer; attach thyself to these outpourings.

4. When thou comest not to them, O Indra, thy voices laugh up to thee seeking unfulfilled satisfaction to their lover and lord.

5. Excite entirely, O Indra, that manifold highest ecstasy below,—tha Is of thee which is universal being and supreme.

6. Us too in that, O Indra, wholly excite to bliss; make us full of stron ecstasy and victorious strength, O thou brilliant in steadfast force.

7. So do thou dispose to us, O Indra, wide knowledge full of light, ful of substance, in nature of that greatness, enduring all our life unimpaired

8. Dispose to us knowledge of the large, a brilliance of utterly forcefu steadfastness and, Indra, those rapturous masteries.

9. Declare ye with your words Indra of the Substance, lord of substance full of the rik (knowledge); as he goeth we call on him for expansion of ou being.

10. In every pouring of the nectar for capacity, of the large and increase of the large, for Indra proceeds.

SRI AUROBINDO

* Rig Veda, I. 9; Rishi: Madhucchandas

PHILOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS*

VI

The Triple Brahman

PARABRAHMAN is now on the way to phenomenal manifestation; the Absolute Shakespeare of Existence, the infinite *Kavi*, Thinker and Poet, is, by the mere existence of the eternal creative force Maya, about to shadow forth a world of living realities out of Himself which have yet no independent existence. He becomes phenomenally a Creator, and Container of the Universe, though really He is what He ever was, absolute and unchanged. To understand why and how the Universe appears what it is, we have deliberately to abandon our scientific standpoint of transcendental knowledge and speaking the language of Nescience, represent the Absolute as limiting Itself, the One becoming the Many, the pure ultra-Spiritual unrefining Itself into the mental and material. We are like the modern astrologer who, knowing perfectly well that the earth moves round the sun, must yet persist in speaking of the Sun as moving and standing in this part of the heavens or that other, because he has to do with the relative *positions* of the Sun and planets with regard to men living in the earth and not with the ultimate astronomical realities.

From this point of view we have to begin with a dualism of the thing and its shadow, Purusha and Prakriti, commonly called spirit and matter. Properly speaking, the distinction is illusory, since there is nothing which is exclusively spirit or exclusively matter, nor can the Universe be strictly parcelled out between these; from the point of view of Reality spirit and matter are not different but the same. We may say, if we like, that the entire Universe is matter and spirit does not exist; we may say, if we like that the entire Universe is spirit and matter does not exist. In either case we are

*From old writings

merely multiplying words without counsel, ignoring the patent fact visible through the Universe that both spirit and matter exist and are indissolubly welded, precisely because they are simply one thing viewed from two sides. The distinction between them is one of the primary dualisms and a first result of the great Ignorance. Maya works out in name and form as material; Maya works out in the conceiver of name and form as spiritual. Purusha is the great principle or force whose presence is necessary to awake creative energy and send it out working into and on shapes of matter. For this reason Purusha is the name usually applied to the conditioned Brahman in His manifestations; but it is always well to remember that the Primal Existence turned towards manifestation has a double aspect, Male and Female, positive and negative. He is the origin of the birth of things and He is the receptacle of the birth and it is to the Male aspect of Himself that the word Purusha predominatingly applies. The image often applied to these relations is that of the man casting his seed into the woman; his duty is merely to originate the seed and deposit it, but it is the woman's duty to cherish the seed, develop it, bring it forth and start it on its career of manifested life. The seed, says the Upanishad, is the self of the Male, it is spirit, and being cast into the Female, Prakriti, it becomes one with her and therefore does her no hurt; spirit takes the shaping appearance of matter and does not break up the appearances of matter, but develops under their law. The Man and the Woman, universal Adam and Eve, are really one and each is incomplete without the other, barren without the other, inactive without the other. Purusha the Male, God, is that side of the One which gives the impulse toward phenomenal existence; Prakriti the Female, Nature, is that side which is and evolves the material of phenomenal existence; both of them are therefore unborn and eternal. The Male is Purusha, he who lurks in the Wide; the Female is Prakriti, the working of the Male, and sometimes called Rayi, the universal movement emanating from the quiescent Male. Purusha is therefore imaged as the Enjoyer, Prakriti as the enjoyed; Purusha as the Witness, Prakriti as the phenomena he witnesses; Purusha as the *getter* or father of things, Prakriti as their *bearer* or mother. And there are many other images the Upanishad employs, Purusha, for instance, symbolising Himself in the Sun, the father of life, and Prakriti in the Earth, the bearer of life. It is necessary thus clearly to define Purusha from the first in order to avoid confusion in endeavouring to grasp the development of Maya as the Upanishads describe it.

Parabrahman in the course of evolving phenomena enters into three

states or conditions which are called in one passage his three habitations and, by a still more suggestive figure, His three states of dream. The first condition is called *avyakta*, the state previous to manifestation, in which all things are involved, but in which nothing is expressed or imaged, the state of ideality, undifferentiated but pregnant of differentiation, just as the seed is pregnant of the bark, sap, pith, fibre, leaf, fruit and flower and all else that unites to make the conception of a tree; just as the protoplasm is pregnant of all the extraordinary variations of animal life. It is, in its objective aspect, the seed-state of things. The objective possibility, and indeed necessity of such a condition of the whole Universe, cannot be denied; for this is the invariable method of development which the operations of Nature show to us. Evolution does not mean that out of protoplasm as a material so many organisms have been created or added by an outside power, but that they have been developed out of the protoplasm; and if developed, they were already there existent and have been manifested by some power dwelling and working in the protoplasm itself. But open up the protoplasm, as you will, you will not find in it the rudiments of the organs and organisms it will hereafter develop. So also though the protoplasm and everything else is evolved out of ether, yet no symptoms of them would yield themselves up to an analytical research into ether. The organs and organisms are in the protoplasm, the leaf, flower, fruit in the seed and all forms in the ether from which they evolve, in an undifferentiated condition and therefore defy the method of analysis which is confined to the discovery of differences. This is the state called involution. So also ether itself, gross or subtle, and all that evolves from ether is involved in Avyakta; they are present but they can never be discovered there because there they are undifferentiated. Plato's world of ideas is a confused attempt to arrive at this condition of things, confused because it unites two incompatible things, the conditions of Avyakta and those of the next state presided over by Hiranyagarbha.

The question then arises, what is the subjective aspect of Parabrahman in the state of Avyakta? The organs and organisms are evolved out of protoplasm and forms out of ether by a power which resides and works in them, and that power must be intelligent consciousness unmanifested; *must*, because it is obviously a power that can plan, arrange and suit means to ends; *must* because otherwise the law of subtler involving grosser cannot obtain. If matter is all, then from the point of view of matter, the gross is more real because more palpable than the subtle and unreality cannot develop reality; it is intelligent consciousness and nothing else we know of that not only has

the power of containing at one and the same time the gross and the subtle, but does consistently proceed in its method of creation or evolution from vagueness to precision, from no form to form and from simple form to complex form. If the discoveries of Science mean anything and are not a chaos, an illusion or a chimera, they can only mean the existence of an intelligent consciousness present and working in all things. Parabrahman therefore is present subjectively even in the condition of Avyakta no less than in the other conditions as intelligent consciousness and therefore as bliss.

For the rest, we are driven to the use of metaphors, and since metaphors must be used, one will do as well as another, for none can be entirely applicable. Let us then image Avyakta as an egg, the golden egg of the Puranas full of the waters of undifferentiated existence and divided into two halves, the upper or luminous half filled with the upper waters of subjective ideation, the lower or tenebrous half with the lower waters of objective ideation. In the upper half Purusha is concealed as the final cause of things; it is there that is formed the idea of undifferentiated, eternal, infinite, universal Spirit. In the lower half he is concealed as Prakriti, the material cause of things; it is there that is formed the idea of undifferentiated, eternal, infinite, universal matter, with the implications Time, Space and Causality involved in its infinity. It is represented mythologically by Vishnu on the causal Ocean sitting on the hood of Ananta, the infinite snake whose endless folds are Time, and are also Space and are also Causality, these three being fundamentally one,—a Trinity. In the upper half Parabrahman is still utterly Himself, but with a Janus face, one side contemplating the Absolute Reality which He *is*, the other envisaging Maya, looking on the endless procession of her works not yet as a reality, but as a phantasmagoria. In the lower half if we may use a daring metaphor, Parabrahman forgets Himself. He is subjectively in the state corresponding to utter sleep or trance from which when a man awakes he can only realise that he was and that he was in a state of bliss resulting from the complete absence of limitation; that he was conscious in that state, follows from his realisation of blissful existence, but the consciousness is not a part of his realisation. This concealment of Consciousness is a characteristic of the seed-state of things and it is what is meant by saying that when Parabrahman enters into matter as Prakriti, He forgets Himself.

Of such a condition, the realisations of consciousness do not return to us we can have no particular information. The Yogin passes through it on his way to the Eternal, but he hastens to this goal and does not linger in it; no

nly so, but absorption in this stage is greatly dreaded except as a temporary ecessity; for if the soul finally leaves the body in that condition, it must ecommence the cycle of evolution all over again; for it has identified itself ith the seed state of things and must follow the nature of Avyakta which to start on the motions of Evolution by the regular order of universal mani-station. This absorption is called the Prakriti *laya* or absorption in Prakriti. he Yogin can enter into this state of complete Nescience or Avidya and emain there for centuries, but if by any chance his body is preserved and he eturns to it, he brings nothing back to the store of our knowledge on this de of Avyakta.

Parabrahman in the state of Avyakta Purusha is known as *Prājna*, the Master of *Prajnā*, Eternal Wisdom or Providence, for it is He that He orders nd marshals before Himself like a great poet planning a wonderful master-iece in his mind, the eternal laws of existence and the unending procession f the worlds. Vidya and Avidya are here perfectly balanced, the former ill and quiescent though comprehensive, the latter not yet at active work, aiting for the command, let there be darkness. And then the veil of dark-ess, Vidya seems to be in abeyance, and from the disturbance of the balance esults inequality; then out of the darkness Eternal Wisdom streams forth o its task of creation and Hiranyagarbha, the Golden Child, is born....

ŚRI AUROBINDO

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA*

(A translation)

CHAPTER V

URJOONA

THOU declarest the renunciation of works, O Krishna, and again tho declarest Yoga in works. Which one alone of these twain is the bette this tell me clearly, leaving no doubt behind.

KRISHNA

Renunciation of works, or Yoga in works, both of them make fo the soul's highest welfare, but of these two Yoga in works is distinguishe above renunciation of works. Know him for the perpetual Sannyasin, wh neither hates nor desires aught, for the mind that rises above the dualitie O strong-armed, is easily and happily released from its bondage. It children who talk of Sankhya and Yoga as distinct and different, and not th learned; he who cleaveth wholly to even one of these findeth the fruit both. To the high heaven whereto the Sankhyas win, the men of Yoga also, and he who seeth Sankhya and Yoga as one seeth indeed. But renu ciation, without Yoga, O great of arm, is very difficult to arrive at; and t sage that hath Yoga travelleth quickly to God. When a man hath Yoga, t Self of him is purified from obscuration, he is master of the Self and vict over the senses; he whose Self has become one with the self of all creat things, though he do works, can receive no defilement. The Yogin se the reality of things and thinks, "Truly I do nothing at all"; yea, when sees or hears or touches, when he smells and when he tastes, in his goi

* From old writings

nd in his sleeping and in his breathing, whether he talk, whether he put out r take in, whether he close his eyes or open them, still he holds, "Lo, 'tis ut the senses that move in the fields of the senses". When a man doeth, eposing all his works on the Eternal and abandoning attachment, sin cannot tay in his soul even as water on the leaf of a lotus. With their body, mind nd understanding self and with pure and unaffected senses the Yogins, elinquishing attachment, do works for the cleansing of the Self. The soul hat has Yoga abandons the fruit of its works, and gains instead a confident nd utter peace; but the soul that has not Yoga clings to the fruit of its works, nd by the working of desire it falleth into bondage. When a man is master f his self, and has renounced all works in his heart, then the embodied pirit sitteth at ease in his nine-gated city, neither doing nor causing to be one. The Lord createth not works nor the authorship of works for His eople, neither yoketh He them to the fruits of their works; 'tis the nature a man that is busy and taketh its own course. The Lord taketh to himself he sin of none, neither accepteth He the righteousness of any; but the wisdom f living beings is clouded over with Nescience and 'tis by this that these re bewildered. Of those who by Knowledge have destroyed the nescience f the Self, Wisdom riseth like the sun and lighteth up that Self of All. Then they perceive Him alone and are Self of Him, and to Him consecrated faith and all for Him; the revolving wheel clutches them not any more ecause Wisdom has washed them pure of all stain. The Brahmin endowed ith learning and modest culture, the cow, the elephant and the very dog nd the Pariah none touches, all these the wise regard with equal eyes. Even their human life they have conquered this creation whose minds have taken oot in that divine Equality, for the Eternal also is without a defect and oketh on all his creatures with equal eyes; therefore in the Eternal they ave their root. He is not overjoyed when he getteth what is of pleasant rowth, nor is he troubled when he tasteth of bitterness; his reason is stead-st and he subjects not himself to delusion but knoweth the eternal and him abideth. His soul clings not to the touches of outward things but hat happiness he finds he finds in the Self; therefore his soul is made ne in Yoga with Eternal Brahman, the happiness he tastes does not cease r perish. For the enjoyments that are born of touch and contact are very ombs of misery, they begin and they end; the wise man taketh no delight these. For he who even on this earth and before his release from this ortal body hath strength to stand up in the speed and rush of wrath and st, he is the happy man. That man is the Yogin whose bliss is within and

his delight and ease are inward; him an inner light illumines, and he goeth to cessation in the Brahman for he becometh Brahman. Rishis from whom all stain and darkness have faded away, who have cut Doubt away from their hearts and are masters of Self, whose whole delight and work is to do good to all created things—these win to cessation in the Eternal. The strivers after perfection, the governed souls who are delivered from the grip of wrath and desire, lo, the Paradise of cessation in Brahman liveth all about them, for they have knowledge of the Self within. Keeping the touches of outward things from his soul and concentrating sight between his eyebrows, making equal the outbreath and the inbreath as they move within the nostrils, master of his senses and mind and reason, who utterly desireth salvation, desire and wrath and fear have departed from him for ever; verily, he is already a released and delivered soul. He knows me for the One that feasteth on man's sacrifice and his austerities, the mighty Lord of all the worlds and the heart's friend of all creatures, and knowing, he travelleth to the Peace.

SRI AUROBINDO

THE TRUTH-CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE IGNORANCE*

IT is important from the outset to clarify our understanding on the truth of Supermind,—that which the ancients termed the Truth-consciousness,—so that we may focus our aim wholly on that all-comprehensive Reality. For Supermind now presents itself as the supreme Guide by which we can enter into the fullness and potency of the Divine Consciousness. This necessitates first a shift or displacement in our own central attitude, from the habitual egocentric outlook, in order to break finally from the revolving fixity which represents mind's present reluctance to change and open itself to that infinitely greater Power. Since Supermind is not the mental consciousness but above and separate, though yet secretly connected with it, a decisive step, a complete re-orientation on the part of the individual, has eventually to be made, in order to realise and become wholly convinced of its Reality. The ancient Seers, traditionally associated with the Indian Vedic Age, discovered the bridge in a dynamic spiritual knowledge, which gave them a bold and direct entry into the heart of Truth, sweeping beyond all mental preconceptions and ideas of what this Truth should be. We now realise however, more practically than the ancients did, that this spiritual knowledge is not merely for individual salvation or liberation from the world, but has to be used as the basis for the integral transformation of the earth nature, by which the individual can become more and more a radiating centre of light and enlightenment. It is for man therefore to give himself wholly and become the divine instrument in this endeavour.

By a detachment from the ego-centre one begins to see the true limitation of mind. Even the highest reach of mind in its conception of the Absolute (which is the critical test of our limitation of knowing), can only arrive at an ultimate duality which we figure in the conjoined Personal and

**The Life Divine*, Volume II, Chapter I, pp. 22-32 (2nd edn., latest reprint 1949)

Impersonal Reality. In order to realise the true Unity and Oneness of the Absolute, we have either to silence the mind or permit a higher Light to penetrate its workings and uplift its vision. By this means the fundamental Nature of the Absolute has been discerned in its pristine purity as a three-told Reality,—an infinite Existence, infinite Consciousness and infinite Delight of Being. These exist together as the inseparable strands of the divine Unity; and it is this Unity that has entered into Creation as the individual and indivisible essence, while at the same time it sustains and upholds all Cosmos (as the creative Power), and yet ever remains in its own Purity above Cosmos—the transcendent Reality. These are the triple statuses of the Divine that we experience in the world as God the Supreme, Nature the executive Force, and the individual being as the instrument of growth and development. On the idealised level of our thought these triple statuses have become the three-fold perfections of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. But by the penetrating light and calm of the soul-being the interwoven triple strands of the Divine Nature are seen more truly in the Oneness of the Supreme, all-pervading, all-encompassing and immanent in all beings. The duality of our ordinary mentalised outlook is merely a simplification or partial grasp of the real trinity, and springs from the limitation of mind and its fundamental dividing nature. Thus, for example, in our ordinary outlook on the universe, when we exclude God from our conception, we merely fix ourselves in that duality of opposites where man and Nature are ever condemned to stand against each other as contending and antagonistic opponents. It is only the admission of the third all-embracing principle that can heal the duality and transform it into the true Oneness of the divine Omnipresence. Duality in fact is the beginning of division and fragmentation (which is a necessary phase in the evolutionary ascent), but without the intervention of a higher co-ordinating Principle, this process of division and sub-division can only lead to an eventual dis-integration and annihilation. Triplicity on the other hand is the true basis of reconciliation and harmony, and is the natural integral foundation for the complete divine order of being and awareness.

Here we see the essential difference between the nature of mind, and that of the Consciousness beyond mind; the one based on a fundamental duality and the other on the all-embracing triple Nature of Reality. It is important therefore from the very beginning to found our own thought and knowledge on this fundamental triple relation. We then begin to comprehend the true inter-relatedness of all the multiple diversities that con-

stitute Cosmos; for this is the key to the inner secret harmony and oneness pervading and embracing all things, as well as revealing their transcendent Origin. The present indecisiveness of science is indeed largely due to the habitual duality of our mentalised seeing, of which a typical example is the separate conceptions of field and particle structure. It is only when we consider the proper inter-relation of these two concepts that we find that both the resistant particle centre (which represents the uttermost compression of Energy), and the expansive field (which represents the interchange and uttermost extension of Energy), are part of one continuous system contained and held by a Force that interconnects and at the same time constitutes the essential thread of each. We see then that the nature of this universal Force can only be that of a Conscious Power directed towards a supreme Harmony; and this is the real key to the relation of what we see as two separate entities. It is as though we were viewing the spaces of a grating (separate and disjointed segments of space) as the sole reality, and ignoring the fact that the spaces themselves exist only by virtue of a continuous medium that surrounds them. For what we habitually see as separate phenomena are really embraced by a greater Reality, a Force or Energy which is in fact the manifest expression of the true creative Power or Consciousness-Force of the Divine. Thus whether we observe this Force as it acts in and between the minutest particles of matter, or holding together worlds as one whole system, it is ever possessed by a Consciousness, —that of the divine creative Power itself. It is because of this all-pervading and indivisible Presence of the divine Consciousness-Force that we are able to discover a harmonious law underlying and integrating all relations; and this alone explains the fundamental co-ordination and inter-relatedness of all cosmic phenomena. It is impossible, therefore, without the knowledge of the triple relation and ultimate nature of things, for us to gain a comprehensive vision of Reality, which is the key to our understanding of the complex cosmic Nature, both visible and occult.

The indeterminability that we find at the centre of matter is only the open admission of mind's insufficiency to grasp the integral truth of it. Since man is confronted on all sides by an ultimate duality, it does not follow that oneness does not exist as the central core of Reality. Rather we have to learn to open our mind to a more comprehensive zone of knowing; which we are repeatedly assured by the spiritual pathfinders does exist beyond the habitual ego attachments. This opening of mind demands, as we have already suggested, a change of centre in our own outlook and seeing, a

shift of consciousness from the ego restriction to the true centre of our being where the embryonic light-seed of soul resides. It is this latter which has to grow and transform our nature in accordance with the higher Law of the supra-Nature. It is because the mind in its total absorption and activity in the lower Nature is as yet unaware of this higher Reality, that the individual as the growing-point of the evolutionary ascent is compelled to make the effort to surpass his present limited mental sphere by establishing contact with his inner soul-being (as the starting-point and nucleus of a higher growth), in order to be able to expand from that psychic centre into the universality and become one of the increasing centres of illumined consciousness in the world. By stepping outside the narrow orbit of the ego, by the opening of soul and reaching towards a higher light-receptive plane of mind, we discover the key in the realisation of a greater Reality which is the divine Truth-consciousness. When the embryonic inner self begins to unfold there is at first perhaps a gleam, a penetrating pin-point of light that expands, or may be a sudden stream of elevating illumination, and by it one comes to face directly the true Self, the origin of all selves and beings. It was because of this powerful realisation, obliterating and overpowering all our habitual personal self-assertions, that the ancient mystics spoke of that cosmic and supra-cosmic Self as the one, and even the sole, Reality. The realisation of the Self became a pass-word, particularly in Indian thought, to mean the attainment of the transcendent Consciousness. It became the symbol of one's true identity with the Highest in which the narrow personal self is completely merged in and united with the Reality of the original Self or ever-existent Being. In that all-absorbing experience only the transcendent Self remains as the all-Reality. Yet the individual by thus opening and submerging his self-confined 'I'-ness does not really lose his true individuality, but rather by elevating his mental self and joining it to the vaster Reality—its true Origin,—he realises not separateness but the enveloping Oneness of all things and beings. What we really lose (and this no doubt causes the pain), is the attachment of the ego and the enclosed protection it has given us, shielding us like a stout integument from the vastness of the cosmic Reality. The reaction of the ego is due to the fact that it persists in interposing its own familiar viewpoint as the more secure anchorage of the individual being and outlook, against the unfamiliarity and seeming unreality of the Vastness beyond. This intervention however, has to be seen in its true perspective as an impediment to our progress, if we are to overcome it. We have to be wholly cognisant

of the ego's real subordinate status, as the instrument of the divine Power, and not a self-existent being.

The Absolute is the Source of all things,—Impersonal in its Vastness,—while at the same time it has become all things, though it is by no means bounded by any or even all of its creations and emanations. It is also the essence of all things revealing itself immanently to us as the One who is the Many, the infinite and many-centred Person who is at the same time the Lord of Creation. It is through this latter conception that we reach a more intimate and personal relation with the Absolute than that of the pure impersonal Vast. Yet both aspects, the impersonal Source and the intimately related Person, are not only together real but are insolubly One. A seeing beyond mind has to intervene here if we are to become wholly conscious of that all-pervading Oneness. What mind seizes as the ultimate duality of the One Existence is in fact a partial actuality of the All-Being, a subordinate Truth that shows us the point where Creation or Manifestation begins, where the One enters into and becomes the Many while yet ever remaining the One Supreme. Yet even the highest Truth of the Absolute, that which eludes mind's grasp, is not something aloof from the world and creation; for within the manifestation itself the integral Wholeness of the Absolute is to be found,—as the real essence and nucleus of the individual being. We do not need to seek therefore beyond our own earthly existence, or to escape from the world in order to realise the freedom of the Infinite that is unbounded by the limitation of Creation. By going inwards and immersing ourselves in the calm beyond the silenced mind we realise the true Self or all-Being. This indeed is a decisive stage in our evolutionary ascent and development of consciousness, when we become aware of the Silence and the utter Vastness of Spirit; for it is the wide awakening of the individual consciousness to its true divine Origin. Yet this is no retreat from the world's problems, rather is it a withdrawal in order to gain a firmer and more integral grasp on them. Neither is it a short cut to personal liberation, but the ground and basis for perfection in our worldly work, of which the first step is to cut oneself away from the bondage of ego by uniting with the Infinite. We have to remember always that the primary aim of the spiritual evolution, of which the earth is the base, is to establish the fullest connection between the spirit and the earth nature itself. The realisation of the transcendent consciousness is thus a necessary instigating phase in order to bring the inner silence and calm into the actuality of one's life and being, and through it establish the firm connection with

the higher spiritual Reality. For unless we first silence and still the unceasing revolving of mind and quieten the incessant pulls of the ego-desire in us, we cannot in this mesh of distraction become aware of the truth of anything beyond mind and the present imperfect existence. The inner or higher silence brings us our first convincing and reconciling experience of that higher Reality, and this must form the essential basis of our widening into the cosmic and supra-cosmic consciousness.

What we have referred to as the Divine Consciousness, Sri Aurobindo has more precisely termed Supermind, which is the Consciousness that belongs to the divine creative Power, the central cosmic Matrix and creative Origin of all beings and becomings. This is the central creative Consciousness of Cosmos to which man can open and is the real dynamic key to his higher ascent. It is a Consciousness that embraces the Unity and totality, even while it enters into the diversity, fragmentation and individual separateness of things. In our present restricted outlook we only catch glimpses of this Unity mainly through a vague intuitive sense, which is really a first stirring of the true intuition appearing as a "feeling-into" things but without the calm, wideness and detachment of the inner soul-consciousness. Through this partial opening however, we become aware of a faculty which, fully awakened, can perceive the underlying truth and integral reality of things. By following to its source this immature stirring, we discover its root in the psychic or soul being. It is the growth and emergence of the latter that must necessarily form the central pivot of a new consciousness centred in the truth of the Divine Reality and its omnipresent Power.

What is meant by the term Ignorance in respect to the present state of the world, is that a partial and imperfect emergence of Consciousness has been reached which has yet further to open into the fullness and perfection of its divine Source; and man is here the growing-point in this evolutionary unfoldment. In the cosmic Creation the fundamental ground that was established for the upward ascent is that which has been termed the Inconscience and represents the uttermost obscuration and involution of pure Consciousness in its opposite pole of existence. Inconscience thus formed the basis and starting-point for the evolution of Consciousness in terms of material substance, bringing forth life and the mental being, and eventually seeking to manifest the spiritual reality through the evolved psychic being. The Ignorance in this dynamic emergence is the present intermediary state that Consciousness has reached in the world, and forms the natural basis, the opposite pole of Unknowing, out of which the divine Knowledge can progressively take root

in a living and enlightened being. The Ignorance is the ground or field for the present partial emergence to grow into the fullness of manifest Consciousness. Thus the imperfection of the world is no cause for escape from the travail and labour needed to be done by both individual and collectivity to prepare for the spiritual transformation of earth through the power of Knowledge. For the Ignorance is a veil, an obscurity due to the present condition of Mind's incompleteness, whose sovereignty in the world has effectively shut out the Light, Truth and Bliss of the Supernature from the earth-life. It is only by Mind's growth through the individual centres that the opening to the Light can be made, severing the veil of Ignorance,[1] so that the divine Truth itself can penetrate directly into the inconscience of earth, awakening therein the original Consciousness from its latent self-absorbed sleep. This rupture of the veil between Mind and Supermind is indeed the crucial juncture (towards which Sri Aurobindo worked and opened the way) for inaugurating the spiritual transformation of the world. For this severence indicates on the one hand, the individual's readiness to accept and become the instrument of this transformation, and on the other it is a direct opening for the divine Light and Power to enter in its fullness into the life and working of the world. This upward growth in consciousness is in the natural line of man's advancement and is the essential preparation for the entry of the Truth-consciousness into manifest form and activity in the world.

NATHANIEL PEARSON

[1] One is reminded of the recent achievement of supersonic speeds in the air, of which the piercing of the sound barrier is an apt example on the material level of man's constant aspiration to make a wider knowledge the potent and practical instrument of his advancement into the Unknown

THE DIVINE COLLABORATORS

V

THE DIVINE MANIFESTATION AND DIVINE LIFE

BEFORE we proceed to note the identity existing between Sri Aurobindo's views on the Divine Manifestation and the Divine Life and those of the Mother before her meeting with Sri Aurobindo, we had better be clear about what Sri Aurobindo understands by manifestation and the divine life.

There are two important elements which give a distinctive character to the above terms and mark them out as the most creative concepts in spiritual philosophy. The first is the evolutionary and the second the collective element. Manifestation is, according to Sri Aurobindo, the very purpose and goal of evolution. All creation is, in a sense, the manifestation of that which lay latent and unmanifest in the Absolute. It is an expression, a self-expression, of the creative delight of existence; a self-revelation in name and form of the nameless and formless Infinite. But what Sri Aurobindo means by manifestation is not a flawed and imperfect self-revelation under the conditions of mental ignorance and material limitations, as we have today in the mental man, but a perfect self-expression of the Divine Sachchidananda in the triple term of mind, life and body, as the crown of Nature's evolutionary endeavour. He says that emerging from inconscience, the soul of man is mounting, through whatever stumbles and zigzags, towards its own infinite consciousness and bliss in the Divine; and the more it climbs the more it can reveal here, if it will, the light and power and harmony of the higher reaches of its being. The culmination of this evolutionary ascent will be the supreme creative Truth-Consciousness, the transcendent Supermind or Vijnan, in which man will live, even as the Divine lives, in the unfading glory of infinite knowledge and power and creative delight of an immortal existence.

The ascent to the Supermind will be followed by a descent of the supramental Consciousness-Force into the nature of man and the latter's transformation into the divine nature or Para Prakriti. When the transformation is complete,—it is only the supramental Force that can radically transform human nature—the whole being of man will be ready for a perfect manifestation of the Divine in life, which is the ultimate end of evolution. This evolutionary aspect of manifestation has to be taken fully into account in any correct appreciation of Sri Aurobindo's gospel of the Divine Life, for it argues the inevitability of such a consummation.

The second element is, that manifestation, according to Sri Aurobindo, will not be a spiritual victory of an individual or a few exceptional individuals, but a signal triumph of the collective man over the forces of ignorance. For, the crux of the problem of manifestation is the transfiguration of the physical being of man which is half embedded in the subconscient and the inconscient—a thing of obscure appetites and mechanical habits, stubborn in its refusal to admit light and order and any higher conscious force into itself; and no individual, however great he may be, is capable of completely transforming his physical being without there being a considerable change and modification in the general physical being of humanity itself. Matter, like Mind and Life, is an indivisible substance, and if the manifestation of the spirit in it is the final destiny of terrestrial evolution, it has to undergo the supramental transfiguration, just as any other part of the human being; and whatever transformation takes place in it will be the heritage of humanity at large, and not the enclosed monopoly of only a few gifted individuals. It is true, of course, that a few individuals will be the pioneers in this spiritual work of transformation and manifestation, but what they will achieve will be the pledge and prophecy of what humanity in general is called upon to accomplish. This collective aspect of the message of manifestation foreshadows the splendour of a more or less universal perfection in humanity.

This manifestation of Spirit in Matter, of God in man, will be an unhampered expression of man's integral living in the Divine. His body, life, soul and mind, in possession of the Divine and possessed by Him, will reveal nothing but Him in thought and feeling and action, and fulfil Him and His Will in the world. This is what Sri Aurobindo calls the Divine life. Defining the process and the condition of the Divine Life Sri Aurobindo says, "The Divine descends from pure existence through the play of consciousness-Force and Bliss and the creative medium of Supermind

into cosmic being; we ascend from Matter through a developing life, soul and mind and the illuminating medium of Supermind towards the divine Being. The knot of the two, the higher and the lower hemisphere, is where mind and Supermind meet with a veil between them. The rending of the veil is the condition of the divine life in humanity; for by that rending, by the illumining descent of the higher into the nature of the lower being and the forceful ascent of the lower being into the nature of the higher, mind can recover its divine light in the all-comprehending Supermind, the soul realise its divine self in the all-possessing all-blissful Ananda, life possess its divine power in the play of omnipotent Conscious-Force and Matter open to its divine liberty as a form of the divine Existence. And if there be any goal to the evolution which finds here its present crown and head in the human being, other than an aimless circling and an individual escape from the circling, if the infinite potentiality of this creature, who alone here stands between Spirit and Matter with the power to mediate between them, has any meaning other than an ultimate awakening from the delusion of life by despair and disgust of the cosmic effort and its complete rejection, then even such a luminous and puissant transfiguration and emergence of the Divine in the creature must be that high-uplifted goal and that supreme significance."

That the ideal of such a manifestation with its implicits of divine perfection and fulfilment in general humanity as an inevitable evolutionary consummation, is a new one cannot be gainsaid. There is no evidence of its existence either in the traditions of Indian spirituality or in Western religious and philosophic Idealism. The Christian ideal of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth is at best an ethical ideal of righteousness and piety carrying no implications of a collective ascent of mankind to a higher than the present mental level of consciousness and a corresponding descent of any higher Truth-Consciousness into humanity. The idea of Satya Yuga as it prevails in India, is also a rather vague anticipation of a cyclic reign of Truth and Justice ending the sway of ignorance and falsehood. The idealistic thought of mankind has, indeed, dreamed of a millennium upon earth, but the dream, except being a remote inspiration to the higher endeavours of a very small section of humanity, has never been able to base itself on any definite truth of spiritual experience or any comprehensive vision of the purpose and possibilities of evolution. Sri Aurobindo's ideal of the divine manifestation and divine life on earth claims originality, in as much as it is "a thing to be achieved that has not yet been achieved, not yet clearly visualised, even

though it is one natural but still secret outcome of all the past spiritual endeavour." What Sri Aurobindo envisages as the aim of his Integral Yoga,—for he holds up not only the sublime ideal, but gives a definite guidance on the way to its realisation,—is "not an individual achievement of divine realisation for the sake of the individual, but something to be gained for the earth-consciousness here, a cosmic, not solely a supra-cosmic achievement. The thing to be gained also is the bringing in of a Power of consciousness (the Supramental) not yet organised or active directly in earth-nature, even in the spiritual life, but yet to be organised and made directly active."

The divine manifestation in the divine life has been the constant preoccupation of the Mother all through her life, the single aim of all her spiritual strivings. As we read her "Prayers and Meditations", we find it to be the recurring refrain of all her heart's songs mounting towards the Divine. Not content with the bliss of an absorbed union with the Supreme in the immobile depths of her being, she has laboured for long years and through unimaginable difficulties to extend the orbit of the union and its creative bliss down to her most outer physical being, so that from her soul to her body and its activities, all may be an uninterrupted expression of the Divine Presence and an integrated means of the fulfilment of His Will. This colossal work of revealing the divine glory and dispensing the divine Grace in a life of ceaseless activity, she has undertaken, as the "Prayers and Meditations" proclaims from page to page, in response to the express Will of the Divine, so that the fruits of her labours may be reproduced in humanity and there may be a perfect manifestation of Spirit in transformed Matter.

In her Prayer of the 11th December, 1912, the Mother says to the Divine, "Thou alone art the doer and I am the instrument; and when the instrument is ready for a completer manifestation, the manifestation will quite naturally take place." Even so far back as 1912, she knew that the manifestation of the Divine on earth was inevitable and that she was the pioneer instrument chosen for that purpose. The knowledge of her supreme role was clear and definite and she expresses it with a selfless candour and joy in her Prayer of the 10th February, 1913: "My being goes up to Thee in thanksgiving, not because Thou usest this weak and imperfect body to manifest Thyself, but because *Thou dost manifest Thyself*, and that is the Splendour of splendours, the Joy of joys, the Marvel of marvels." Again in her Prayer of the 13th March, 1913, she speaks of the ceaseless prayer of her integral being which desires "to unite with Thee (the Divine) so as to manifest Thee." Union has for her at once a static and a dynamic aspect, for, without a dynamic union in the full

flood of life's activities, there cannot be any manifestation in Matter. The path of discipline which leads to the dynamic union, she has chalked out in her Prayer of the 28th November, 1912, and in many a subsequent Prayer; which proves, if any proof were at all needed, that she knew what she meant by manifestation; and what she meant was exactly what Sri Aurobindo has always held up before humanity as the ideal of his Integral Yoga and the goal of the evolutionary march of Nature. In her Prayer of August 8, 1913, she calls upon the essential divine harmony which is immanent in all things to manifest itself "in the most outward forms of life, in every feeling, in every thought, in every act." Her insistence has always been on the perfection of the most outer, the most physical part of human nature. And we have the same ideal stressed time and again in the writings of Sri Aurobindo: "...Its (of his Yoga) aim is not only to rise out of the ordinary ignorant world-consciousness into the divine consciousness, but to bring the supramental power of that divine consciousness down into the ignorance of mind, life and body, to transform them, to manifest the Divine here and create a divine life in Matter."[1]

With regard to the "Advent" of the Divine, that is to say, His unveiled manifestation in collective humanity, the Mother has been as positive as Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo says,

"If I believe in the probability and not only possibility, if I feel practically certain of the Supramental Descent (I do not fix a date), it is because I have my grounds for the belief, not a faith in the air. I know that the Supramental Descent is inevitable—I have faith in view of my experience that the time can be and should be now and not in a later age.... I have been testing day and night for years upon years more scrupulously than any scientist his theory or his method on the physical plane. That is why I am not alarmed by the aspect of the world around me or disconcerted by the often successful fury of the adverse forces who increase in their rage as the Light comes nearer and nearer to the field of earth and Matter." "I know with absolute certitude that the Supramental is a truth and that its advent is in the very nature of things inevitable."[2]

Let us now listen to what the Mother says in her Prayers to the Divine

[1] "Lights on Yoga" by Sri Aurobindo.

[2] "Letters of Sri Aurobindo," Vol II

far back as 1913-1914. In her Prayer of the 17th August, 1913, she speaks of flying up into "Thy divine atmosphere with the power to return as messengers to the earth and announce the glorious tidings of Thy Advent which is near." Again, on November 29, 1913, she says to the Divine;

> "But the hour of Thy manifestation has come.
> And canticles of joy will soon break out from every side."

Knowing, as she does, her pioneer part in the manifestation, she prays to God, on February 8, 1914:

"I implore that more and more perfectly identified with Thee, I may become nothing else than Thou manifested in word and act..."

Another Prayer (dated Feb 23, 1914) breathes the self-same aspiration:

"Grant that I may be a useful and clairvoyant collaboratrix and that all in me may promote the plenitude of Thy manifestation."

And what is the best way of promoting the plenitude of the divine manifestation?

"To live in Love, by Love, for Love, indissolubly united to Thy highest manifestation..."[1]

"But the supreme science, O Lord, is to be united with Thee, to confide in Thee, to live in Thee, *to be Thou*; and then there is nothing that is impossible to the man manifesting Thy omnipotence."[2]

"There is only one resource, it is to unite ourselves as perfectly as we can with the highest and purest light we can conceive of, to identify our consciousness as completely as possible with the absolute Consciousness, to strive to receive all inspiration from it alone, in order to facilitate as best we can its manifestation upon the earth, and, confident of its power, consider the events with serenity."[3]

In the first and third quotations, the Mother speaks of "the highest manifestation" and "the highest and purest light," which evidently means what

[1] Prayers and Meditations—March 1, 1914.
[2] Do Do —March 17, 1914.
[3] Do Do —March 23, 1914.

Sri Aurobindo calls the supramental manifestation or the supramental light, which is the goal of earthly evolution. She knows that the manifestation she is heralding, initiating and incarnating will be something surpassing all that has taken place up to now. It will be a New Creation, as Sri Aurobindo terms it, or a new race of humanity. The unprecedented perfection of such an eventuality can be glimpsed through one of her old writings of 1912 where, outlining the path of "the manifestation by all of the inner Divinity which is One," and indicating "the most useful work to be done," she says:

"To individualise the states of being *that were never till now conscious in man* and, by that, to put the earth in connection with one or more of the fountains of universal force that are still sealed to it."[1]

This unsealing of the sealed fountains of Force and putting the earth in connection with them—is it not the central secret of Sri Aurobindo's work of the supramental manifestation?

In fact, the more we reflect upon the ideal the Mother had been endeavouring to realise in her life before her meeting with Sri Aurobindo, the more we are struck by the identity of their life's mission and the unwavering certitude of victory with which they have engaged in a grim combat with the forces of terrestrial ignorance. This certitude of victory the Mother had from her early years, not as an outcome of faith, but of a series of profound experiences, and her knowledge about herself and her life's work was luminously confirmed much later by Sri Aurobindo when he wrote,

"Her (the Mother's) embodiment is a chance for the earth-consciusness to receive the Supramental into it and to undergo first the transformation necessary for that to be possible."[2]

"The Mother comes in order to bring down the Supramental and it is the descent which makes full manifestation here possible."[3]

Born to collaborate with Sri Aurobindo in the work of the supramental manifestation and the establishment of the Divine Life on earth, the Mother had the most decisive physical confirmation of her inner certitude when

[1] "Words of the Mother"
[2] "Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother."
[3] "Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother."

she first met Sri Aurobindo at Pondicherry on the 29th March, 1914. The whole teeming mass of her past experiences melted and lit up into one thrilled revelation. The earth shuddered with joy and the heavens showered their benediction when the Mother's soul went up in prayer to the Supreme:

"It matters not if there are hundreds of beings plunged in the densest ignorance. He whom we saw yesterday is on earth: His presence is enough to prove that a day will come when darkness shall be transformed into light, when Thy reign shall be indeed established upon earth."[1]

And thus commenced the marvel of a fateful collaboration for the achievement of the divine Manifestation and the Divine Life upon earth.

RISHABHCHAND

[1] Prayers and Meditations—March 30, 1914

SRI AUROBINDO'S SIGNIFICANCE TO MAN[1]

WE have chosen for this evening's subject "Sri Aurobindo's significance to man" because there are some men who are not mere ordinary individuals; they embody in themselves some idea, ideal or a principle to such an extent that they might fitly be called its representatives. Some men become to us even in their individual life like milestones that measure the advance of man as a race. Sri Aurobindo is such a milestone in more senses than one. Sri Aurobindo is not a mere human personality and all his life appears to be significant to man in more senses than one; He embodies in a supreme degree the intense aspiration of man for the Divine and the possibility of manifesting the Divine in life. On the one hand, he is a milestone in the evolutionary movement of man and he is again an indication of the Divine possibilities to which man can rise. If we look at his early life we get this conviction that his life had a significance for man even from his very childhood. In England, where his father took him for education at the early age of 7, with special care to make a complete Englishman out of him, he typified in himself in an eminent degree "the will to know"; for, an intense zeal for knowledge completely occupied him during the fourteen years of his stay in England. It is a marvel how with his brilliant intellect, his success in the school and the college, and his eminent career during his studies in the I.C.S., he remained immune to all the ordinary ambitions, how he did not fall a prey to the attractions of a brilliant career. Yes, there is something impersonal about him even in his search for knowledge and when we look at this period of his early life in England, we are reminded of the truth of our ancient belief that some spirits come here with a mission of their own they come not so much to take and to receive as to give. Ordinarily, some of the great European thinkers have told us that the spring of man's action lies in the "will-to-be" and "will-to-power". This will-to-be was expressed in its process by the enunciation of three laws of evolution by Sir Charle

[1] Address delivered at the Green's Hotel, Bombay on 11th July 1952

Darwin. "Struggle for existance", "survival of the fittest", "adaptation to environment." On deeper observation, we find that this is rather an incomplete account which does not explain all the activities of man and certainly not his profoundest and highest actions. We should rather add to it "the will to know", "the will to grow", "the will to perfection". In Sri Aurobindo's youth we find this 'will to know' is an impersonal will free from the world of ambition enabling him to drink deep at the fountain of Greek culture, European history, English literature and poetry, imbibing all that is important in the social and political history of Europe. The second great significance that followed the first significance, the "will-to-know" was "will-to-freedom".

As soon as he came to India, this "will-tof-reedom" first asserted itself as the will of Indian Nation to political freedom with which he completely identified himself. Indian political life at that time was dominated by a school of moderatism which relied on petition and prayer to the foreign rulers and looked upon a few seats in the Legislature and a few political reforms as a goal of their activities. Almost on his return to India he criticised the ideology of moderate school and emphasised India's inalienable birthright to "freedom and self-reliance, sacrifice and organisation" as the means for achieving the goal. So unselfish and impersonal is his life from the beginning that hardly out of his teens with all the attractions of a brilliant career in the Baroda State lying before him he threw himself wholeheartedly into the dangerous waters of Indian political life. It was a time when it was risky to shout "Vande Mataram" in the streets of the City, it was a time when politics was the occupation of leisure for the intelligentia. He set for the future politicians the example of sacrifice by resigning his post as Vice-Principal of the Baroda College and joining the National College at Calcutta as its Principal. During those stormy years which decided the trend of Indian political mind permanently, he contributed largely to the formation of the Nationalist Ideology by his contributions to the daily and weekly "Vande Mataram" paper which he conducted from Calcutta. His vast studies of European history, his keen and comprehensive mind and his unrivalled mastery of English language are matters of Indian political history. During those stormy days, the British Government implicated him in the Alipore Bomb case from which he was acquitted for want of evidence. But during the one year of trial that he had to pass in Jail, he revived his studies and practices of Indian Yoga which he had begun at Baroda but which were interrupted by the political activities in which he

had plunged. It was during his confinement in Jail that he had spiritual realisations which changed the course of his future life. We see here that as soon as his contribution to the political life was complete immediately the Divine claimed him as his own.

Apart from the two great significances of Sri Aurobindo's life as typified in his "will-to-know" and the "will-to-freedom" which began with the will to freedom of India and cultimated in the "will to freedom from the thraldom of ignorance", we find here the third great significance of Sri Aurobindo to us. It is that the aim of man is not merely to realise the Divine but to bring down the Divine in his life and change his entire life in the light of the presence and power of the Divine. The founders of all religions have claimed, and rightly, that there is a supra-physical, supra-intellectual origin, a Divine, as the goal of man to reach. They claimed that they had established a connection with the Divine, that they would show the path to man to realise the supreme. With the view to make the realisation of the Supreme possible to man they established Communities of men who accepted their guidance and their path. Their achievements in course of time got mixed up with many impurities of human nature and generally resulted in giving man a religious temperament or a theistical mood. Sri Aurobindo differs from these efforts in the sense that for him the realisation of the Divine is not enough, it is for him only the first and indispensable step but he is not satisfied with merely pointing the way to the Divine, neither is he satisfied with the realisation, the mere contact, or the mere ascent to the Divine. He does not want the Divine to be some miraculous, some out of the way experience to be attained and forgotten or to be attained and lost. The first result of his experience of the Divine consciousness, that came to him in Jail, was that the possibility and the intense will to realise it came to him almost immediately—the possibility of making the realisation of Divine a permanent fact of human consciousness, a dynamic element not acting from above but capable of descending into his nature, if man aspired to it and called it down,—came to him with an intensity that was irresistible. He saw the possibility of establishing the Divine on earth and put that effort as the active goal before him. He made a life-long effort in that direction bringing to that great task a dead earnestness and an intense concentration. This significance of his life to us becomes clear when we study his life during that period. It was after his realisation of the Divine to which he gave expression in his famous "Uttar Para" speech that instead of remaining satisfied with it, he turned, or rather was made to turn, seriously to the

task of finding out the purpose of the Divine in life. He found that the spiritual realisation of the Divine by man must be canalised, must bear its fruit; life on earth must undergo a change by the advent of God in life. Till now man has been keeping God as far away from life as possible, with the result that the life is deprived of the elevating influence, remains impoverished and is subject to false values, which stresses the outward to the neglect of the inner and spiritual.

In his efforts while at Pondicherry to find out the purpose of the Divine in the Universe he saw that this vast Universal movement is an expression of transcendent Reality, which wears before us the aspect of the Inconscient. When we look at this Universe with our senses and mind, we find that it begins with the Inconscient which gradually moves towards higher and higher degrees of consciousness, knowledge and power and that it has culminated in the mental consciousness of man. He sees that this evolutionary process has not stopped and that there are ranges of Consciousness and Being beyond Mind which have to be realised here on earth, of which all religious efforts, philosophical thinking and mystical life of man are the indications and beginnings. As I just now said, he also envisages that the Divine has to be made a dynamic element in man's life so that it may act as a permanent factor, a transforming power on the life and nature of man. The result of this effort, if we reflect deeply we will see, would show that Sri Aurobindo is right in including life and nature as claimants for freedom. The liberation of man, according to him, is not only the liberation of his Spirit, his Being, but it is also a liberation of his Becoming, liberation of his Nature. At present, the nature of man is imperfect and is in bondage. Sri Aurobindo says that not only the spirit but the nature of man has equal right to freedom and perfection. This freedom of nature and its possibility of perfection, this double nature of liberation—that of spirit and nature—has been indicated in the Gita when it enunciates the existence of the supreme Divine Nature as "Parashakti or prakriti of the Divine". This great and earnest effort of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother to make the Divine a permanent element acting on life here gradually transforming human nature, is the most important significance of his life to man. For it is bound to change the conditions around us. Not merely to realise and to attain but to bring down and manifest the Divine is his great message. He is thus a landmark in the process of evolution of the Cosmos, marking on the one hand the stage of development of consciousness from mind to the Supermind. He is like an eternal star in the firmament

acting for the great transition from the mental to the Higher consciousness.

The third significance of his life to us today is his stress on the dynamic aspect of the ultimate Reality. We have schools of philosophy and thought that stress the static and the impersonal and the inactive aspect of the Reality almost to the exclusion of the dynamic aspect. This dynamic aspect again is connected with the Cosmic Evolutionary movement according to Sri Aurobindo. The general conception that the Divine is an absentee landlord who has left the management of his estate for ever in the hands of the powers of Ignorance is one of the current superstitions of our present day mentality. To our ordinary view, life appears as a field for the satisfaction of our impulses, instincts, desires and ambitions. It is the field in which we have first to live but as soon as we can manage to live, the next thing is to acquire, to possess, to satisfy our desires and our ambitions; but if you look at the world and life in the deeper aspects, as Sri Aurobindo shows us, then we will see that the significance of life lies in the growth of our consciousness. Even when we do not see this truth and occupy ourselves with egoism and desires it is really this inner growth which we attain through our ignorant strivings that really counts. Man, subject to his ignorant state, is yet acted upon and helped by the Supreme to reach the goal of his life. And if man could consciously call upon the Supreme to help him in this process of growth his cries would not go unheard. Sri Aurobindo tells us that the Divine is not far, that He is not indifferent to our cries, that He is intimately connected with us, that He is the deepest Self of our selves and that therefore, no sincere cry or appeal can ever go unheard.

A question will arise in our minds that if the Divine is active and if his connection with life is organic and intimate, has He not provided for the ignorant human being any means within his reach which would lead him out of his ignorance to the Light and Truth? Generally we believe, even when we are not atheists, that there is no such provision but it is in reality a kind of atheism to believe that the Divine has left the field of life only to the forces of Ignorance and Darkness. If we just try to get out of the power of appearance to impose itself upon us as the Reality we will see that even in the midst of dense ignorance, suffering and evil, there are stretched out innumerable, invisible golden wires of Divine grace all over the world. There seems to be an active veil of Divine grace covering the whole of life. To each man, even to the lowest is given his own conception of truth, his idea of right, his own idea of what is good, of what is pure, what is noble, what is

beautiful. It is the little end of the golden thread, visible before his eyes waiting to be actively caught and pursued among the many hundred other forces of darkness and half light. If the human being catches hold of this golden end of the thread, he will find that it will lead him higher and higher, deeper and deeper till he comes to the presence of the Divine, who is the home of all truth, good and beauty, who is the source of all purities and all nobility. There have been philosophies that have stressed the Absolute to the exclusion of the world—they have made it unrelated to the Cosmos and to man. We hear so much about the Absolute far, far away. But what is this Absolute? Is it void of all content? Is it a zero, is it a vacuum, parent of all this vast creation stretching in Eternal time? Rather is it not that this Absolute is itself full of Content, an Infinite of infinite potentialities? It brings out in Eternal flow of Time that which it contains in its Timeless Eternity as innumerable potentialities? What is that Absolute which cannot have any consciousness —cannot harbour power and knowledge? It would,—if it is unable to contain being, consciousness and delight, be relative and not Absolute.

That from which creation flows is not a contentless and remote Absolute but as some of the schools of thought in India have said: it is a Mother,—a Mother-consciousness,—who creates out of Herself this vast cosmos and is looking upon it all with her deep maternal love and solicitude, she holds this creation to her bosom—it is Her life-throb and her sustaining power that keep it going. And this you will see even in the ordinary word that is used for the Cosmos. This cosmos is called "Brahmanda"—"the egg of the Infinite". It contains, therefore, all the potentialities of the Infinite. It is not a falsehood or an unreality—this universe. It is charged with the infinite potentialities of the Infinite. It contains all in its timeless embryonic seed state, all that slowly unrolls in the movement of eternal flow of Time.

This idea is supported by some of the descriptions of the process of creation in the Upanishads. The question is: how does the One succeed in becoming Many: how does the Infinite manage to become all these objects, movements and beings? It is said: "*Sa tapastapva, idam sarvam asṛjata.*" "He energised, he brooded—and having brooded he created all this universe" What is this Tapas? It is the heat, it is energising, it is gathering of force, the heat of incubation. Consciousness concentrated on effectivity is Tapas—Consciousness turned towards effectivity is Tapas. It is the Infinite as the Mother-Spirit who broods over this great Cosmic egg and releases into effective manifestation all the innumerable divine potentialities of its own.

Thus it is that more than man it is also the Divine, the Supreme Mother

who is acting on man to help him to evolve to the higher stage of evolution. Man being a conscious being his own will, his own aspiration, his environment count for some thing in the direction of Man's ascent to the Reality. But it is also the Grace and the action of the Divine that is a potent invisible factor. Sri Aurobindo represented the dynamic Divine in his own life.

The next significance of Sri Aurobindo to us is that he represents to us realised perfection. As the realisation of the Dynamic Divine is an indespensable part of his Integral Truth so is equally his conception of a Divine Perfection. As it is not possible to conceive of the Divine devoid of his Dynamic Power, so also it is not possible to conceive of the Divine without his Divine Perfection. And here a great question arises in our mind: is it at all possible to attain such Divine perfection? We have been told that man is born imperfect and is bound to remain imperfect though he may be constantly dreaming of and making ineffectual striving for attaining perfection. There are systems of philosophy and religion that have taught that this imperfection, ignorance and suffering are constitutional to this cosmos and any attempt at overcoming this constitutional imperfection is foredoomed to failure. Some have therefore preached that this world of imperfection is an unreality and an illusion to be got rid of by a passage into the Infinite Reality which is beyond. Some religions have preached that there is a Perfection possible, but that is not here, on this earth, but somewhere beyond, in a heaven of the Divine. This world is, according to them, a world of ignorance, suffering and pain and is offered to the human being as a test. If man lives his life without submitting to its temptations, retains his faith, piety, devotion and purity, then he is rewarded after death by elevation to a heaven of perfection.

Sri Aurobindo, on the contrary, consistent with his realisation of the Dynamic Divine, believes that the perfection,—not merely mental or moral, i.e. not merely human but,—a Divine Perfection is not only possible but the rational and in a sense inevitable end of this evolutionary process.

He finds this in the teachings of the Upanishads, he finds in the Isha, in the Kena, in the Taittiriya. The germ of it you yourself will find in the Gita if you read it impartially. There the Kurukshetra, the battlefield of the two armies, is not merely the result of clashing human interests, ambitions and passions. It is a field, the outer aspect of which is human, but the deeper and the more profound aspect shows it to be a concern of the Vishvarupa he Divine in his aspect of Universality. In the 11th chapter of the Gita Sri Krishna, the Supreme Transcendental Divine, shows to Arjuna tha

ll the circumstances of Kurukshetra have been manoevered by him as the Vishvarupa and even the result has been decided in his all knowing Wisdom.

Along with the Reality of the Kurukshetra as a Dynamic field for the ction of the Divine we find that the Gita speaks of the possibility of attaining Sadharmya—the condition of having the same nature as the Divine. This ttaining to the Divine nature has been not only spoken of by the Gita but he practical line of advance towards it has been implied and indicated in the ffirmation of the Vibhuti in the Gita. The ordinary imperfect human nature s overpassed in the case of great men; but in the case of the Vibhuti, says the Gita, there is an embodiment of some aspect of the Divine, some quality, ome power, not evolved from below, but as it were, descended from Above. Thus, the Divine seems to prepare the bridge between the present human mperfection and the Divine Perfection.

Sri Aurobindo has worked out this implication on a wider and all comprehensive basis. He has pointed out that the goal of cosmic evolution could only be the manifestation of a greater than mental consciousness of man which would enable him to manifest Divine Perfection; for, with his present instruments of nature, however he may try, man will never be able to attain individual or collective perfection. This attainment of a higher than mental consciousness is in evidence in man from the very beginning of history. In spite of periods of agnosticism and atheism man has retained his irrepressible aspiration for a higher state of perfection which has been termed variously as God, the Absolute, the Perfect and so on. The greatness of Sri Aurobindo lies not merely in pointing out to man the rationality and the inevitability of this Supramental goal of his evolution but it lies more in his lifelong effort to bring down that perfection and embody it in himself so as to make it possible for others to attain it. During this long period of Sadhana, extending over forty long years, he succeeded in bringing down the Overmental consciousness, he transformed his mental, vital and physical consciousness and transformed his nature into a mould in which the Supramental Divine Consciousness, a self-existent Truth-consciousness could work unhampered by the admixture of mind's ignorance and egoism, vital preferences and ambition and the obstruction of the inertia of the physical. Thus he is to us not merely one who has pointed out the goal of Divine perfection, but he stands before us as the embodiment of that very perfection under the limits of the present state of evolution. Thus he has made us understand not only the dynamic aspect of the Divine but also the aspect of Divine Perfection. We have seen, perhaps, in our lives many great personalities

who have represented to us some aspect of this Divine Perfection. We may have seen God-intoxicated devotees, men of knowledge who live identified with the consciousness of the Infinite, but with none else do we associate the conception of an Integral spiritual perfection as we do with Sri Aurobindo. None represents to us in the same degree the realised embodiment of spiritual perfection as Sri Aurobindo. ...

Here is knowledge acting as self-existent Light, knowledge of Cosmic wideness and unsurpassed clarity. Here we feel an organised vastness, a living Infinity, which yet deigns to satisfy the demands of our mere human reason. Here is Power, Harmony, Peace, Equality, Purity and Grandeur. Here is someone living in the oneness of the soul, in the spiritual unity which does not abrogate the rich variation of its own Self. Here is one who cut out a wide path for humanity to climb from its Ignorance to the peaks of Divine Knowledge. Here is an alchemist who has brought for mankind the Divine Elixir of life transforming the dross of human nature into a divine substance. Thus he represents the type of transformed humanity of the future. He is the founder and the precursor of the Divine race of men. Accepting this significance of Sri Aurobindo, we are able to enlarge our vision and make it cosmic. Accepting him as the realised perfection we learn to look upon life not merely as a field for satisfying our ego and desires but a field for the Divine, a field for the growth of the Divine that is in us. He tells us 'look at your life not in terms of your ego but as an opportunity for the growth of consciousness towards a Divine Perfection. Look at it as Nature looks at it, as the Divine looks at it, try to feel and know the purpose and direction of nature's movement. That which is coming is more important than that which is". That purpose he himself has beautifully expressed in his great epic Savitri where he traces the beginning of creation and envisages its purpose. How was the world created out of the Absolute? He replies:

> The Absolute, the Perfect, the Alone—
> Has called out of the Silence his mute force
> Where she lay in the featureless and formless hush
> Guarding from Time by her immobile sleep
> The ineffable puissance of his solitude.
> The Absolute, the Perfect, the Alone
> Has entered with his silence into space:
> He has fashioned these countless persons of one self;
> He lives in all—who lived in his Vast alone....

"The Absolute, the Perfect, the Immune,
One who is in us as our secret self,
Our mask of imperfection has assumed,
He has made this tenement of flesh his own.
His image in the human measure cast
That to his divine measure we might rise....
This transfiguration is earth's due to heaven:
A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme:
His nature we must put on as he put ours;
We are sons of God and must be even as he;
His human portions, we must grow divine."

What counts to us today and what counts to the man in the street today, is the new values, the higher spiritual values which Sri Aurobindo has brought for mankind. The ultimate values of life are not material, not economic, not intellectual not even ethical but spiritual. The stressing of this spiritual values and bringing into prominence this applicability, making available to men a dynamic divine consciousness as a moulding influence for the individual and collective life is to my mind his highest service to man. Even though during his long life the ordinary man did not find any ordinary indication of his love for mankind, I believe, it was the greater, the purer, the more divine, for that very reason. To strive for a distant ideal of the Truth which is going to save mankind, to clarify the goal, to lay down the lines of advance towards it requires a sympathy and love for mankind which can only proceed from a spiritual identity. Then only can it work for man irrespective of man's appreciation or applause for such divine work is its own reward.

The more he advanced the more he became one with the Divine Grace, an embodiment of Grace. This great significance of Sri Aurobindo for us is this embodiment of Grace. After this, all human ignorance was his field of action, for like the Divine he went on excusing all human frailties, with his gaze fixed upon the great ideal, he went on waiting patiently for the slow transformation of human nature to come. It would be in fitness of things if we could pray to him this evening as the embodiment of the Divine Grace. "O Light, O Grace, make us deserving of Thyself, O Thou Divinising stream of Divine Grace pour forth thy saving and transforming waters upon us; and let Thy unceasing flood of Grace flow fertilising the desert of human life."

A. B. PURANI

REVIEWS

(1)

The Waters of Silence. *By Thomas Merton.* Publishers: Hollis and Career, London.

The Waters of Silence have been flowing, in the East as well as in the West, quenching the thirst of those who preferred to die in search of them rather than drink the 'water of bitterness and contradiction' that flows in the world. These fountains of undefiled water flow unseen by men and only some spiritual dowser detects their presence and slakes his thirst and the mortal becomes immortal rapt in the ecstasy of Divine Love. "There is intoxication in the waters of contemplation" as the author says and "These are the waters which the world does not know, because it prefers the water of bitterness and contradiction. These are the waters of peace, of which Christ said: 'He that shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall not thirst for ever. But the water that I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up into life everlasting.'"

The book, surveys the course of the Cistercian order of monks, from its early beginnings to our present times, its most chequered career full of harrowing tales of hardships and sufferings, its epochs of true spiritual ascension and then long periods when the fire of aspiration sank low and allowed itself to be obscured by the smoke of external rules and regulations losing sight of the goal for which these are at best only means.

In fact, every spiritual movement follows a rhythmic course; in the beginning there is a genuine adherence to the inner spirit of the Master's teaching, a sincere response to the 'voice of infinity' 'the call of the One', on the part of those who catch fire. They are not rigid in their outlook because they have imbibed the true core of the gospel and so they follow it with a flexible fidelity, modifying the discipline to suit various constitutions and temperaments so that all those who have a call can grow freely with

the joy of the spontaneous outflowering of the soul. But afterwards, the true inspiration begins to ebb away and more and more stress is laid on externalities, such as organization, a strict observance of rules by all without exception, and the result is a faultless organization, everything methodized in the smallest detail, even such things as meditation are fixed with clockwise regularity, starting with the ringing of the bell and ending just at the fixed time—no matter how you are inwardly disposed—and, we find a magnificent cathedral, lavishly decorated but with the deity missing. This phase while it systematises the life in a faultily faultless order, chalks out streamlined regulations and programmes, turns the whole thing into a rigid and elaborate steel-frame, rendering mechanical what was the spontaneous expression of an aspiration for a higher life. But though the true flame dwindles weak for a long while, it never lets itself be completely swallowed up by the encompassing darkness and again souls come ablaze with the vivifying love and light of the spirit and once more the smouldering fires leap forth and radiate down the centuries and then the period of decline gives out its true secret and reveals itself as a period of silent and laborious preparation, when a frame-work was being built to house a wider spiritual movement.

This is also the story of the Cistercians as narrated by Merton in the book under review. The most refreshing feature of the book is the clarity and the keenness of the author's vision which always disentangles the true from the false, the genuine from the pseudo, always putting the right value on things. He knows, for instance, that austerities and disciplines have value only in so far as they bring us near our goal and that to make them ends in themselves is nothing short of putting the cart before the horse. He always deprecates such tendencies and lays emphasis on the true renunciation which comes as a result of the growth of the soul to a higher altitude and its beckoning to the lower animal nature of man also to breathe in an atmosphere of pure and rarefied air. He says about St. Benedict, "Instead of letting men harden themselves by striving to become heroes of physical endurance, St. Benedict shifted the whole impact of asceticism to the interior—from the flesh to the will. His monks had plenty to eat and plenty of time to sleep....Extraordinary mortifications were forbidden or discouraged."

The whole sense of the spiritual striving is to outgrow the pettiness of the egoistic life full of vanity, arrogance, selfishness as it is, and to live in the Spirit which is eternal and infinite and the same in all. The spiritual vision sees the Divine in all beings and therefore the spiritual man has an equal love for all. As Sri Aurobindo says, "...man has to see and adore the One in all

things animate and inanimate, to worship the manifestation in sun and star and flower, in man and every living creature, in the forms and forces, qualities and powers of Nature, *vasudevah sarvam iti.*" Hence a copernican revolution is called for in the consciousness of man, he has to become from ego-centric to God-centric in his inview and outview. But it has been invariably noticed that these external austerities engender a sense of personal superiority and magnify the ego thus erecting insurmountable barriers in the path of the seeker. I am reminded of a deep observation that Socrates made about one of his disciples who tried to excel others in ascetic bareness. Antisthenes had no property and dressed in so ragged a cloak that Socrates twitted him: "I can see your vanity Antisthenes through the holes of your cloak."

Moreover, the root of the malady is the presence of 'desire' in man's vital nature and unless this darkness yields place to the light of knowledge one cannot be truly liberated. That is why the Mother has said, "It is an inner attitude of freedom from attachment and from greed of food and desire of the palate that is needed, not undue diminution of the quantity taken or any self-starvation. One must take sufficient food for the maintenance of the body and its strength and health but without attachment or desire." (Words of the Mother 2nd Series)

Merton cites interesting instances when the monks cut themselves adrift from the spirit of the rule of St. Benedict and clung to its letter with the result that the way was open for interpretations that pampered the demands of the lower desires. "St. Benedict had prohibited the flesh of four-footed animals. These casuists pointed out that chickens and ducks and quails and partridges and turkeys and pheasants had only two feet and therefore were not forbidden."

But, as a rule, the Cistercians were men of limpid sincerity and in order to sweep aside all these ritual practices and soulless observance of rules they tended towards extremes of puritanic zeal and led a life of austere bareness and hardship which bordered near upon hurting the flesh. "There would be plenty of cold and hunger and insecurity. Night after night the monk would go to his simple bed of straw, under the stone-vaulting of his dormitory, to rest his aching muscles for a few hours. He would rise in the middle of the night and pray and work for a good long time before he got anything to put into his empty stomach." Such a hard life, lived day after day, in our view is bound to create a state of tension in the sadhaka and except in very rare cases a reaction towards relaxation becomes inevitable. Moreover, a God-love strictly methodised and made compulsory is bound to rob the whole

effort of the joy of spontaneous rising of the flame of aspiration.

One pauses a little horrified to know that the Cistercians in their hey-day could not understand that the Divine manifests itself in Beauty also. Though they built their monasteries in lonely and wooded places 'they did not seek out such places for the sake of scenery.' Some historians are of the opinion, though Merton does not agree with them, that sometimes they went to the length of preferring marshy and unhealthy places even though 'they never favoured a spirituality that sought perfection in suicide.' Although St. Bernard laid great stress on love for all creatures as he says, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is charity" still in actual practice they shunned the ordinary mortals so much that once they selected a place which "was inhabited only by wild beasts, and the monks congratulated themselves on having found a place that was all the more perfect for their life because it was repugnant and inaccessible to seculars." Though it is true that in the early stages of sadhana a great vigilance about one's company is imperative because complete transformation of nature demands a complete rejection of the past and its associations which again and again block the path of progress, yet a nervous shrinking also is not compatible with the law of spiritual growth. Those who seek the Divine must by their own life as an example kindle the same aspiration in others so that more and more souls are enabled to open themselves to the breath of a higher life.

But these are minor matters of detail and the real thing is the single-pointed aspiration that brought them together in a collective life in the twelfth century and even today their inspiring example shines as a beacon of light 'amid the encircling gloom' of the present materialist phase of civilization.

There was also an attempt to bring about a true reconciliation between contemplation and external activity and though it eventually failed still it opened the way for new possibilities in the future. The motto was: "first realisation and then action." In our view if they are made complementary then each promotes the other and thus they go on hand in hand. The Mother says in one of Her meditations: "For meditation, contemplation, Union is the result obtained—the flower that blooms; the daily activity is the anvil on which all the elements must pass and re-pass in order to be purified, refined, made supple and ripe for illumination which contemplation gives to them. All these elements must be thus passed one after the other through the crucible before activity becomes needless for the integral development." But then again action does not become redundant and superfluous but turns "into the means to manifest Thee so as to awaken the other centres

of consciousness to the same dual work of the forge and illumination."

Merton's words are also illuminating and pregnant with a deep truth on this subject. He writes: "Firmly established in peace and harmony within himself, when all the powers of his soul are united by grace and virtue, the contemplative receives into his soul, into his intellect and will, the choice graces of God's light and love.

"Under the impulsion of these forces within him, he can go out of his cloister into the exterior world and do his share of the world's activities, performing good works for Christ and the Church and enriching himself still more with the fruits of his activity."

Again about the supreme ecstasy that comes of the Divine union and in which the mind and the intellect are stilled he writes: "Not that love and intellection have here ceased, but they have been drawn up to a level so transcendentally simple that the soul acts without knowing that it acts, and loves and knows all at once in a movement so pure and so free of all expense of human energy that it seems not to be acting or knowing or loving at all."

At times Merton's words become revelatory and unmistakably show the depth of his own realizations.

"God loves us that we may learn to love Him for love's sake, because He knows that pure love is the most perfect beatitude, and that is what He wants to share with us."

And here he knocks the bottom out of austerities and penances:

"It was the Holy Ghost who taught these saints the one magnificent truth that so many austere penitents had seemed to forget: that if we love God, it is because God has loved us more, and that God has created us not so much to fear Him and honour him and worship him, as to love him since love is the perfection of all adoration and homage."

These are universal truths and in each clime and country men of higher realization have expressed them in almost identical language. E.W.F. Tomlin writes in his book, 'The Great Philosophers—The Eastern World': "In our survey, we have come upon thinker after thinker...who, often against all reason and unaided by revelation, have preached the 'divine connection' Maat, the Tao, the Way, with a unanimity impossible to confound with coincidence, and foolish to dismiss as illusion or poetry."

The *Waters of Silence* is a great book and will go a long way in helping

man realise the light of Divine knowledge which alone can bring on earth a true living peace. After a perusal of the book containing luminous accounts of the spiritual aspirants in Europe and America one finds Sri Aurobindo's words in his *Message to America* fully justified:

"East and West have the same human nature, a common human destiny, the same aspiration after a greater perfection, the same seeking after something higher than itself, something towards which inwardly and even outwardly we move. There has been a tendency in some minds to dwell on the spirituality or mysticism of the East and the materialism of the West; but the West has had no less than the East its spiritual seekings and, though not in such profusion, its saints and sages and mystics, the East has had its materialistic tendencies, its material splendours..."

R. N. KHANNA

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Bhagavad-Bhakti-Rasayanam. Author: *Madhusudana Saraswati.* Editor and Commentator: *Vedantitilaka Damodaran Nambutirippad.* Publisher: K. Shankaran Namputiri, Cochin Satram, Kedarghat, Banaras. Pp. 15+8+265. Price Rs. 2-4/-

The theory and practice (or the science and art) of Bhakti, devotion to the Divine Lord is the subject matter of this treatise entitled "Bhagavad-Bhakti-Rasayanam" which means the Elixir that is Devotion to the Divine. The author is Madhusudan Saraswati of the *Advaita-Siddhi* fame. The work has three sections, called *Ullāsas* of which the first has the author's own gloss, while the second and third are commented upon by the editor. A *tippaṇi* or brief annotation for the commentary on all the Ullasas is also written by Sri Nambutirippad. This work has been twice published before. For the first time it was brought to light and printed in Calcutta, but it was incomplete, containing only the first section. Later, some forty years ago, it appeared in the Achyuta Granthamala series, Banaras, edited with the author's own commentary for the first Ullasa and with the Editor's commentary for the rest, by the erudite scholar Goswami Damodarlal Sastri. His was indeed a creditable undertaking for having made a suc-

cessful attempt to unearth the missing sections and publishing the whole work as stated above. But it must be borne in mind that in a sense his was a pioneering work, and as in all such cases the errors attending upon first attempts crept into his edition, wrong words found place in the text, and he being an avowed follower of Madhwacharya did not, as the present editor has shown in this edition, enter into the spirit of the author's text. Thus arose the need for this publication. Here the Nambutirippad restores the right words to their right places in the text and wherever he finds it necessary to differ from the previous commentator, he does so in order to bring out the spirit of the text and there is close reasoning for the conclusions he arrives at. We shall state in brief the central idea of the Vedantin Madusudan in the theme of his choice and that will enable us to appreciate his special contribution to the subject. This will be very much facilitated by forming an impression in our mind of the life of Madhusudan, his heritage, environment, activities, literary and social, if any, in short, of the personality as a whole, not in details and parts, as that is unnecessary for our purpose and beyond our scope.

Ram Misra, a Kashyapa Brahmin hailed from Kanauj and settled in Bengal, first resided in Navadwip and later shifted to East Bengal. His family and the descendants lived for a long time in the village of Kotalipara in the Faridpur District. Purandaracharya was the sixth in lineage and Kamalanayana was the third son of his brother Yadavananda of whom the tenth descendent is Sjt. Chintaharana Chakravarti of Bethune College, Calcutta, who is naturally proud of his lineage and preserves the geneological tree.

Now, Kamalanayana, after completing the usual course of studies, moved to Navadwip for advanced courses and there he studied under Sri Rama Tarkavagisha under whom also studied Gadadhara Bhattacharya of Neo-Nyaya fame, a senior contemporary. His remarkable brilliance in the studies and later in debating skill left its impress not only in the schools, but wherever he made his appearance. But, the supreme object of life had such an irresistible attraction for him that he left Bengal for good with the avowed object of renouncing the world i.e. worldly life and entering the monastic order under proper guidance. He visited Banaras and under Madhava Saraswati studied Vedanta, and got initiated into Sannyas, formal renunciation, by Vishweshwara Saraswati who gave him on initiation into Sannyas the name of Madhusudan Saraswati. All these facts are gathered from the author's works. From a perusal of the detailed discussion of scholars about

ıe date, we can safely state his period to be 1495-1585 A.D. or 1490-1602 A.D. ı any case he had a long life and record of service, apart from being the author f about 20 works of which at least ten are vedantic and could be safely ssigned to his authorship. King Pratapaditya, Emperor Akbar and cele rities in literary and devotional spheres known to history were his con- mporaries among whom we shall mention one for the interest that at- ches itself to this saint-author and the light it throws on his courage in ıe face of crisis and in a way on the dynamic personality of this great Ve- antin. That name is none other than Akbar the Great Mogul.

In an article on 'The organisation of Sannyasins of the Vedanta' (1925 R.A.S.) Farquhar records an incident in the life of Madhusudan Sara- vati which shows the mettle of the man in a critical situation. We shall riefly mention that episode here, as that spotlights the courage, broad mpathies and practical wisdom of this Sannyasin which aspect is not as uch well-known and appreciated as Madhusudan the Vedantin, star of ıe first magnitude in the firmament of Advaita dialectics. The Fakirs of slam were molesting the Sannyasins of the Vedanta, inflicting physical jury on the poor unarmed mendicants; while the former were all armed ıd conscious that they belonged to the same faith as the reigning emperor, ıe latter, precluded from being armed by their station in life i.e. *sannyās*, nunciation, had nothing but their bare bodies and tonsured heads in- ting the villainous assaults of the crude and vulgar elements in the com- unity of Fakirs. When the Sannyasins could no longer bear with the ng and sustained attack of the brute forces and approached Madhusudan r advice, the latter made up his mind to put an end to the pitiable plight f the wretched *sādhus* and immediately made a move towards the end. He ent to the capital and sought an interview with the emperor. When Akbar ve him audience and Madhusudan explained to him the situation and the bject of his visit, the emperor thought for a while and sought the inevi- ble Birbal's advice.

As usual, the ready-witted wise man said: "The order of Sannyas among indus is entered into by Brahmins alone who could not carry any lethal eapon in accordance with their shastraic custom. Why not allow other stes also to enter the order of Sannyas and arm them with weapons law- lly? The Brahmin Sannyasins need not carry weapons, let them observe eir custom and shastra, but the rest of the Hindu Sannyasins armed will e sufficient guarantee againt temptation to do mischief from the wicked gabonds among the Fakirs. Dharma Shastra can be properly interpreted,

if Madhusudan Saraswati is so minded, he can find suitable means to amend, interpret, and regulate the shastraic customs and save the Sannaysins as a whole. In that case the emperor would be pleased to grant all legitimate requests in that direction etc." Akbar readily gave his assent to the proposal as far as he was concerned. Madhusudan appreciated the wise counsel of Birbal and accepted it with the approval of the emperor. The plan worked very well to the great relief of the aggrieved Sannyasins. He made the Hindu community accept his novel proposal that of the ten sub-orders of Sannyasins three must be reserved for Brahmins viz. *Ashrama*, *Tirtha* and *Saraswati*, and the remaining seven, *Bharati*, *Giri*, *Aranya* etc. for others. Ever since, this has been observed in North India, though this system does not hold good in the South.

The liberal views of Madhusudan are quite manifest in some of his activities, much more so in his literary works. This fact is noteworthy in view of his uncompromising position as an Advaitin, the author of Advaita-Siddhi in which he has applied his unsurpassed debating skill on the lines of the Neo-Nyaya of Navadwip. India of those centuries considered it a great merit on the part of a scholar who could vanquish his adversary in a debate. Madhusudan in his famous dialectical work mentioned above, especially in the first two sections, employs highly technical terms, raises a number of alternative questions and negatives all the possible answers by confounding the other party or parties. The object is rather to confound than to convince. That was permissible in those days, though it is certainly not admissible in modern times. But it must be noted that while, on the one hand, he was an orthodox Advaitin for dialectical purposes and quite loyal to Shankaracharya, always conformed to rules as ordained in the Dharma Shastras, he was on the other hand a devotee of uncompromising type who upheld the Bhakti-view and strongly advocated the path of devotion, Bhakti Marga, for all seekers and taught by his own example that it was superior to the line of *Jnana*, Knowledge, in many respects and pointed out the difference between the two in the work under review which we shall mention presently. In this connection it may be mentioned that he sought to reconcile the Shruti, the Scripture for Brahma Vidya, with the Pancharatra, the Scripture for Bhakti, the Bhagavata cult. With this object he wrote a small treatise "Ishwara-pratipatti-prakasha" throwing light on the correct grasp of the concept of Godhead in the two scriptures. He equates Virat, Hiranyagarbha, Ishwara and the Transcendental of the Shruti with Samkarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Vasudeva of the Tantra

and concludes that these four are the same as the four parts of the Udgitha, and the *turiya*, the fourth, a secret knowledge of which, he says, is obtained through initiation and by the grace of the Guru.

His was a nature where the qualities of the heart vied with those of the head. In fact he upheld the view of the Bhakti school (p. 100-116) that to hear and utter God's Name are more powerful and effective than the ceremonials ordained in the Smriti (expiatory rites, *prayaschitta*). His innate devotion was nurtured on the soil of his birth; a land known for the free expression of Bhakti at least since Jayadeva's time and famed for the exuberant radiance of Sri Krishna's love since the appearance of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Doubtless his friendship with Tulsidas of Ramayana fame while at Banaras was natural and temperamentally agreeable, a powerful stimulant for his activities in the field of devotional literature. He clearly saw that the orthodox way of propagating Vedantic knowledge and its practice was rigid and narrow and too restrictive while Bhakti, the devotional way was broad-based, inclusive and liberal and threw his weight on its side in the life he led as well as in his writings on the science and art of Bhakti. There are ten works of which the subject-matter is Vedanta, jnanamarga, some of them are independent works and the rest commentaries. Other works are devoted to Bhakti. Here again some are commentaries on Hymns like the Mahimna Stotra, some are independent works like Bhakti-rasayana. That he has written this work after writing many Vedantic works on the side of Knowledge is evident from his references to them in this work. For in his commentary on Karika 24 of Ullasa I, he says 'all this process is expounded in detail in my *Siddhanta Bindu*' (P. 58). In another place (P. 55), "The details are to be understood from my *Vedanta-kalpalatika*" (Com. on 1.20). He does not subscribe to the generally held opinion among the Vedantins that devotion and worship of Brahman with features, *saguna-upasti*, is a concession to human weakness and is meant for the common folk who are weaklings and not competent for Jnana, for *manda-adhikārins*. He drives home his argument and shows how Bhakti Yoga is superior to Jnana Marga for reasons stated in his gloss on the very first verse (pp. 26-27). We can very well understand Madhusudan when without mincing matters he categorically mentions the points of difference between Jnana and Bhakti. The difference pertains to four aspects of the question, he states: *Swarupa*, nature, (2) *Sadhana*, means, (3) *Phala*, fruit, (4) *Adhikara*, competency of the seeker. As regards the first, he says, Bhakti is the state of the mind-stuff sufficiently *melted* and modified so as to take the form of the Lord who is worshipped

while still retaining the recognition of difference between the worshipper and the worshipped, Bhagavan and Bhakta. But Brahma Vidya is the state in which there is no recognition of any difference, no melting of the mind-stuff, *chitta-druti*, and there remains nothing but the consciousness of the Self, one-without-a-second.

2) As regards the means also there is a gulf of difference. The means of acquiring and developing Bhakti lies in hearing and constantly meditating upon the sublime qualities of the Lord Bhagavan. Whereas the Sadhana of Brahmavidya lies in meditating upon "That thou art" and other sentences of the Vedanta.

3) The fruit of Bhakti, the culminating result of the practice is superb Love that has for its object the Divine being, while that of Brahma Vidya is *Kaivalya*, the state Absolute.

4) And last as regards *adhikāra*, qualification, any living being, *prāṇi mātra*, can enter the path of Bhakti. Whereas the line of Brahma Vidya is open only to those who have renounced everything, Sannyasins, and are equipped with the well-known fourfold sadhana beginning with discrimination between the Eternal and transitory and ending with keen desire for liberation.

Madhusudan begins the work with a verse in which he proposes to expound Bhakti Yoga in the light of shastraic texts by which term he means not primarily the Vedantic texts which inculcate the Brahma Vidya, but mainly the Bhagavata and texts like the Gita. It can be put in brief this way. The scripture for the line of Knowledge—Brahma Vidya— is the Shruti, the Upanishads; the canon for the Bhakti Yoga is Bhagavata. Therefore his commentary on the first of the three Ullasas of this work contains exhaustive quotations from that priceless scripture of the Vaishnava cult and every statement he makes in the Karika is well reasoned and supported by resort to passages from the Bhagavata and in a few places by apt lines from the Bhagavad Gita. The commentary of this saint-author on the remaining two *Ullāsas* of the work not being available, it is written by the erudite editor Sri Nambutirippad following faithfully in the footsteps of the great scholar-saint with appropriate and copious quotations from the Bhagavata, Gita, and occasionally from other Puranic texts for comparative reference in support. The first section contains 37 Karikas; along with the author's commentary and the editor's annotation it covers half the volume of the work. There are 72 topics discussed here including the process of the development of Bhakti as Rasa, Bhakti as Sadhana, as means, and Bhakti

as Sadhya, to be realised. If the first Section deals with Bhakti in a general way, the second expounds Bhakti in particular details, while the last establishes the theory of Bhakti as Rasa—as distinct from the traditional nine Rasas which he admits and respects. In his treatment of the subject of Bhakti-Rasa he does not move an inch astray from rules, the recognised forms of the constituent elements of Rasa as propounded by Alankarikas from the earliest times. Independent and bold thinker, yet a tenacious traditionalist; a towering intellect, yet an irrepressible ardour of the heart given without reserve to the Godhead Sri Krishna whose body is the Para Brahman, he knew how to meet the rival parties of his times in the field of religious philosophies and gave the lie direct to the general and loose accusation that the Advaitins—the Mayavadins—are atheists, Buddhists in disguise, by his personal example as much as by his writings.

We may sum up in the words of the scholar who writing the Foreword to the book puts the substance of Madhusudan's life as he lived and the position he occupied as one who never forgot in all his writings on Bhakti that he was an Advaitin:

"If so, is it that *Kaivalya*, the realisation of the Absolute, does not arise from Knowledge alone? No, who says so? It is true that Knowledge being opposed to Ignorance, the former dispels the latter. But the Knowledge must be applied to the acquisition of Bhakti. Incidentally that knowledge is helpful for the purpose of *Kaivalya*. Who is there propounding a theory that God confers *mukti*, liberation, on the devotee without a knowledge of the Atman? The fact is this that the relation of cause and effect exists between Bhakti and Mukti, the former is the effect, while the latter is the cause. Therefore knowledge must be directed towards the acquiring of Bhakti. Bhakti achieves results which can not be done by knowledge or anything else. It is a fact that knowledge is the direct and immediate cause of *Kaivalya* which is a different matter altogether. Therefore it is that liberated souls assume embodiments and worship the Godhead, says Shankaracharya, who in a famous oft-quoted verse sings:

"Even when the difference is blotted out, O Lord, I am thine, not Thou mine. For the wave is of the Sea, not the Sea of the wave."

A word about Madhusudan's beloved God is necessary before we close this review. To him Sri Krishna is not an incarnation of the Godhead, but is the Godhead who incarnates himself in the ten embodiments of the Puranas as is sung by Jayadeva in the opening verses of Gita Govinda, *daśa kṛti-kṛté*.

The vast erudition, care and industry of the editor are manifest on every page. The value of this publication is enhanced by the editor being a redoubtable champion of Vedanta doubled with being a devotee of intense ardour.

It deserves to be prescribed as text-book in all colleges and universities and Pathashalas of the old type where Shastras are being taught and prescribed for examinations as such a step would inculcate Bhakti in the minds of the students of Vedanta which generally, not always, not without exception, dries up the heart-springs of the soul leaving the Vedantin dry. It is a great pleasure to learn that already it is prescribed in the "Sanga-Veda-Vidyalaya" at Kashi, conducted by the famous Pundit of unsurpassed learning, Sri Rajeshwar Sastry Dravid of Banaras.

T. V. KAPALI SASTRY